

# EXHIBIT

“31”

The Honorable Nathaniel M Gorton  
United States District Judge

December 5, 2019

Dear Your Honor,

There are many people that come into your life but few that make an impact. I'm honored to have Michelle Janavs in my life and grateful for her positive influence. I've known Michelle for more than ten years. Our families are friends and Michelle and I became close through spending personal time together and volunteering at Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County.

Michelle and I have many things in common and connected right from when we met. We both enjoy volunteer work and are very involved but Michelle always stepped up to take the lead to make the most impact. For example, most recently she was co-chairman for Harvesters 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary fundraising event. Harvesters is an auxiliary group of women who support Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County and has been an active member for over 15 years. Co-chairing this event required many volunteer hours and effort which resulted in providing over 3 million meals to our community. In addition to her role in Harvesters, watching her create a program at Second Harvest from scratch with her daughter was beyond impressive. This program was named Izzy's Corner. Michelle's continued commitment to the program opened the doors for younger children to volunteer time and provide nourishment and supplies to underprivileged children in our county. It's incredible the number of children that have learned volunteer values that have been instilled in them, thanks to Michelle's initiative. Her actions and giving nature have touched so much of our county.

Over the years we have spent lots of personal time together. There have been plenty of good times but it's the tough times that show who a person really is. We both have very tightknit loving families and care very much for them. When Michelle's mother Lilly [REDACTED], I was blown away by Michelle's true family nature. I have never witnessed anyone, friend or acquaintance, dedicate all of their time and take action as the head of the family the way Michelle did. For months and months, she was right by her mother's side and holding her father's hand [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I have no doubt that Lilly's recovery had everything to do with Michelle. I have yet to experience a life rattling moment like this in my family but if it were to occur, thanks to observing Michelle's actions, I feel confident that I too would want to be the one holding up my family until they could stand on their own again.

Michelle's disposition is positive, caring, loving, giving and honest. Since her involvement, I've seen my friend struggle to stay herself. Her remorse is clouding her spirit and as much as all of her friends try, she is pained by the immense impact this has been on her family and friends. For someone that only wants to care and assist people she is beside herself with how devastating her actions have been. There is nothing she would like more then to undo her actions.

We all need a Michelle in our lives, someone that makes you a better person. I'm thrilled to have mine and so is her family and all of her other friends. Any time she will have to spend away from us all will be a time of hardship, especially for her husband and 3 children and family. They have been through an emotional and mental rollercoaster for the past year that has been a powerful lesson learned. This year for Michelle has been catastrophic and harder than any time in prison would be. Consideration on any lesser sentence would be a blessing for everyone. Michelle is answering to her decisions and shows remorse every day. Your Honor, kindly consider showing Michelle grace.

With appreciation,

*Melissa Knode*